

CHAPTER V.—VITAL STATISTICS*

CONSPECTUS

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A short historical outline of the early collection of vital statistics in Canada is given at pp. 104-105 of the 1940 edition of the Year Book. Co-operation of the provinces in the collection of comparable statistics was finally effected as a consequence of the establishment of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, under the Statistics Act of 1918. From 1921 to 1925 vital statistics were compiled by the Bureau on a comparable basis for all provinces with the exception of Quebec. Quebec has been included in the registration area only as from Jan. 1, 1926, from which date statistics have been on a comparable basis in all provinces.

The main tables of Sections 1-4 that follow cover statistics for all the provinces. Section 5 deals with those of Yukon and the Northwest Territories and reasons for this separation are given at that place.

An important factor should be borne in mind by the student who uses either the tables that follow or the detailed reports issued by the Bureau of Statistics for comparative purposes. The variation in the age and sex distribution of the population in different provinces makes crude rates between them not strictly comparable.

Method of Computation of Estimates of Population by Age and Sex.—For the calculation of vital statistics rates, it is important to know each year not only the total population but the distribution by age and sex. Hitherto calculations requiring this information have been, for the most part, restricted to the years about the census date as it was felt that the use of census age distributions for periods more than two or three years later than the census involved too much inaccuracy. The estimates presented in the statement on p. 130 cover the period from 1931 to 1944 and are calculated from the Censuses of 1931 and 1941, the births and deaths of each year, of the period, immigration to and known emigration from the country, and certain cross-classifications available in the 1941 Census on interprovincial migrants.

* This Chapter, with the exception of the material on the method of computation of estimates of population by age and sex, pp. 129-131, and also that on Life Tables, pp. 131-132 (which were contributed by N. Keyfitz, M.A., Social Analysis Branch), has been revised by J. T. Marshall, Chief of the Vital Statistics Branch, Dominion Bureau of Statistics. A list of the publications of this Branch will be found in Chapter XXX, Sect. 1, under "Population".